

ESP Approach and Development of a Police-Genre L2 English Corpus

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Abstract

As part of the global community where English continues to emerge as the lingua franca, Japan has recognized the importance of having a workforce with L2 English communicative competence. This workforce includes vital sectors that interact with non-Japanese speakers on a daily basis such as the police. The problem facing the police in Japan is that many of them lack the confidence and L2 English skills to effectively communicate with the growing number of foreign tourists and residents. This paper introduces a new project designed within the framework of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and corpus studies that intends to investigate the English that the Kyoto Police should be learning. It also describes how a grant from Kyoto Sangyo University is being applied to help fund the study.

Keywords : ESP, Corpus Studies, Police English, Communication, L2 English

Introduction

The field of ESP, or English for Specific Purposes is diverse in scope, but has a common and specific goal of teaching target language to a specific discourse community in order to achieve a desired learning outcome. The research generated from field of ESP is intended to address specific learner needs more so than general learning needs (Basturkmen, 2010). Hutchins & Waters (1987, p. 19) state that “ESP is an approach to teaching in which all decisions are based on the learners’ reason for learning”. In the case of the police in Kyoto, Japan, this equates to a need by officers and administrative staff who interact with non-Japanese speaking foreign tourists and residents to develop their L2 English communicative competence in order to complete a given task or duty. To address these needs of the Kyoto police, the ESP approach is appropriate because it is viewed as an approach to meet the needs of the learner group, and not a product of language analysis (Mizel, 2016).

The number of people that the Kyoto police are having to interact with in English is continuously

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growing. According to the Japan National Tourism Organization (2016) 19,737,409 foreign visitors came to Japan, more the four times the number of tourists in 2000. With the continuing growth of tourism in Japan, the Japan Tourism Agency (2016) expects this number will grow to over 40 million people by the year 2020. Japan is not only seeing an ongoing growth trend of foreign tourists, as the Ministry of Justice (2016) stated, the foreign resident population in Japan had grown to 2.2 million in 2015, up 5.2 percent from 2014. It is clear that the continuous growth of a foreign presence in Japan is putting pressure on public services such as the police to be able to interact with them on a common linguistic ground.

In order to address this demand for L2 English interaction, more discipline-specific materials based on a specialized corpus is required, rather than general L2 English learning materials (Jones & Durrant, 2010). Therefore, this study describes the steps taken thus far to; (1) identify the specific language needs of the Kyoto Police through a needs analysis, (2) create a unique course in order to instruct both police officers and university students who are interested in learning police English, and (3) create a police genre-based corpus that more accurately focuses on the unique target language that is required by the police.

Literature Review

The need for L2 English communicative competence is not limited to Japan. Several research papers have presented needs analyses and identified the necessity for non-English speaking police to acquire a functional level of communication ability.

In Jordan, Aldohon (2014) conducted a study that involved the distribution and analysis of a questionnaire to 46 tourist police officers around the country. The questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale, and identified that the primary need of tourist police officers is to have strong speaking and listening skills in L2 English. More specifically, the study identified that general conversation, answering questions, and problem-solving ability were the priority. Although this study concluded that the tourist police in Jordan have a clear need to develop their L2 English speaking and listening skills, it did not offer any recommendations with respect to what content specifically should be covered in order to achieve the learning goals.

In Turkey, Akeyl & Yalçın (1991) conducted a study in which they produced a textbook and accompanying videotape for Turkish police who interact with the tourists. The materials were created to target the specific language needs of lower-intermediate to intermediate level L2 English speaking police officers. They conducted a needs analysis that focused on desired content of the textbook and the course, and what learners are required to do in order to achieve those aims. In other words, they wanted to highlight what should be learned and how it should be learned. The textbook and videotape

mainly used authentic and interesting materials in order to motivate learners. This study goes into detail about the textbook structure, its content, and then suggests specific activities and pedagogical approaches. However, it does not provide data on how the topics, target language, and content were selected. In a related study, Ulum (2016), also investigated the police in Turkey by conducting an ESP needs analysis. In this study, 105 police officers from the national police were surveyed. Ulum found that speaking and listening are the top required skills, and that although the police identified L2 English ability as important for their work. Adding to the study by Akeyl & Yalçın, Ulum noted that motivation to learn was still an important factor.

Alhuqbani (2014a) investigated the English language needs, motivations and attitudes of police cadets in Saudi Arabia. This study involved a questionnaire given to 223 police cadets and found that learners indeed perceived English learning as positive, and that an ESP approach to teaching produced positive learning attitudes for the cadets. However, a later evaluative study by Alhuqbani (2014b) that involved 122 police cadets, six English teachers, and sixteen former cadets, found confounding results. Through another questionnaire and observations, the second study produced results indicating that the initial ESP course proved to be ineffective and inappropriate for learners based on administrative and methodological factors. This study highlights the importance of a well-thought-out curriculum design in an ESP course, and how courses need to be functional, appropriate for the learner, and meet specific needs of learners. Alqurashi (2011) also conducted a study in Saudi Arabia that investigated the motives of Saudi police to learn English. This study involved 24 active duty police who participated in a six-month English course. Results showed that participants found the course length to be far too long and the content was boring. In addition, although it was agreed upon by participants that English was important for their careers, several participants were not serious about learning English. This study highlights the importance of creating a course that is interesting, timely, and perceived as valuable by participants.

In a study by Mosallem (1984), 150 police Egyptian officers from ten different departments were surveyed to discover their needs when using L2 English while on duty. The study found that although specific needs of police officers varied depending upon their respective departments, there was a clear overall need for a core-English program. The most common difficulties with English were; following English spoken at native speed, comprehension of various English dialects, being able to respond in English, and issues caused by cultural differences. The importance of this study was the recognition that vocabulary that is taught should stem from language registers common to the areas of police work.

As highlighted in previous studies related to the L2 English needs of police in various countries, there is a universal requirement for communicative competence. Most of the studies conducted a

needs analysis and some provided suggestions on materials. However, none of the previous studies continued with the next step, the creation of police-genre corpus in order to truly address the L2 English learning needs of the police. This is where the current research project funded by Kyoto Sangyo University picks up the research torch in an effort to continue this research to its final and logical end.

Methodology

The first step in this current project with the Kyoto police was to conduct a needs analysis. As stated by Khan et al. (2011, p. 632), a needs analysis is “a process which is undertaken by trainers, teachers and course designers to ascertain the pre-requisites for developing a course along with its plan implementation.” Otilia (2015, p. 54) adds to this by stating that “it aims at collecting information about the learners and at defining the target situation and environment”. To best understand what was required of an English course to help the Kyoto police, the needs analysis was framed around the PAIL acronym (Noguchi, 1998). The PAIL acronym represents *purpose*, *audience*, *information*, and *language*. The *purpose* of this course was to develop confidence and communicative competence of the Kyoto police who interact with foreign people. A secondary purpose of the course was to introduce university students to the English that would be required in a career with the Kyoto police force. The *audience* consisted of police officers and administrative workers from the Kyoto police force who interact with foreign people regularly and who need to improve their English communication ability. Another audience group consisted of university students keen to pursue a career with law enforcement. The *information* was content based on common tasks such as giving directions, conducting home visits, completing accident and incident reports, and doing lost and found reports. Finally, the *language* includes specific vocabulary and target phrases that would be most beneficial, such as imperative and interrogative statements. From this needs analysis, an initial plan of the course content was formed. However, this was only an initial step in the desired direction.

The second step in this project was the creation of a unique course called Active English for Police, developed in a joint effort by the Kyoto police and Kyoto Sangyo University in Japan (Holsworth, 2018). During the formation of this course, two main approaches were used to create materials. The first (and primary) approach was through interviews with several members of the Kyoto police force education and translation department. The second approach was to identify existing textbook materials that could be analyzed for potential use. Only two possible textbooks were identified, but neither were chosen since they did not meet the specific needs of the learners. The first book was a basic phrasebook from the Kyoto police (Tachibana, 1991) and the second was Career Paths – Police, published by Express publishing (Taylor & Dooley, 2011). From these two

approaches, five topics were selected to be covered in the course; giving directions, lost and found, questioning people, accidents and incidents, and home visits. Although the instructor has developed sufficient materials for this course, a more genre-specific corpus-based set materials would be required in order to more fully and accurately meet learner needs.

The third step in the course evolution leads to the current research project, and the creation of a genre-based corpus to more specifically identify target language patterns, vocabulary, and phrases that more directly address the needs of the Kyoto police. According to Richards & Schmidt (2002, p. 138), “corpus linguistics [should] include the meanings of words across registers, the distribution and function of grammatical forms and categories...and lexico-grammatical associations.” These main points provide good guidelines for the creation of a police genre corpus. The first stage was to decide what written materials would constitute the base of the corpus. A variety of written documents selected by the Kyoto police which represent different areas such as community safety, traffic control, lost and found, and public announcements were selected. These documents will be scanned and translated from L1 Japanese to L2 English using a professional translation service. The translated documents, once completed, will be used to create a corpus of between 50-100 thousand words. According to Flowerdew (2004), although larger corpora such as the British National Corpus (BNC) can be beneficial for comparison purposes, the more important factors in creating a corpus is what it contains and how representative it is of the discourse community.

Analyses using a variety of software such as *Wordsmith* (Scott, 2019), and *AntConc*, *TagAnt*, *AntWordProfiler*, and *AntFileConverter* created by Laurence Anthony (2014) will be used to analyze the data. At the time of writing this report, two files have been translated. The first file consists of written documents relating to traffic control and has approximately 13,300 English words. The second document is related to public security and consists of approximately 3,300 English words. The two files will be analyzed using the above software, and in addition, comparisons with the British National Corpus will be conducted to further highlight any unique patterns within the texts representing the Kyoto police English. It should be noted that the use of native English corpora as a comparison tool has been criticized for not recognizing learner language as a unique yet valid variation of the language, and thus can create a trap of misconception (Granger, 2012). However, many researchers still support this style of comparison based on the fact that the comparison clearly reveals valuable differences between the learner language and native language use (Mukherjee, 2005; Tenfjord et al., 2006).

Preliminary Results

Although only two sets of documents have been translated and analyzed thus far, they already

provide valuable insight into important information regarding vocabulary frequencies, important phrases, and interesting lexico-grammatical language usage. Due to the relatively small size of data within each file, the two were combined to represent one set of data for analyses. First, a word list based on frequency within the data set was created. Although function words such as “and” and “the” are included, the focus of this study is on content words such as proper nouns and verbs. See Table 1 below for a list of the top ten content words. It also contains a comparison list of keywords that are explained later on this section.

Table 1. *Police Corpus Word List and Keyword List Top 10 Comparison*

Corpus Word List	Frequency	Keyword List	Frequency	Keyness value
vehicle	104	vehicle	104	1093844.5
traffic	102	traffic	102	1072608.7
person	91	police	68	711617.4
road	77	target	69	674075.9
target	69	driving	61	607882.9
police	68	Japan	46	440570.1
when	63	article	45	421621.7
driving	61	due	31	318896.5
act	47	act	47	308610.5
Japan	46	international	33	304306.3

Note. Keyness values are based on Chi-square tests produced using AntConc.

As one can see, the vocabulary list above is not that surprising given the topics of the material were limited to traffic and security documents provided by the Kyoto police. However, upon further examination of the vocabulary above, the data reveals more important information about usage and context or *key word in context* (KWIC). Note the difference in word order between the corpus word list and the keyword list. The keyword list shows a different word order, and this is based on keyness values. This keyword list also highlights the vocabulary that stand out within the police corpus and that are worthy of further exploration. For example, when the word “act” is further analyzed it is primarily used as a noun, in reference to a legal document rather than the most common usage as a verb. See the Figure 1 below for concordance output examples of how the word “act” appears within the police corpus.

Concordance Hits 47	
Hit	KWIC
1	2, Paragraph 1 of the Police Duties Execution Act, a suspicious person is defined as
2	on provisions of the Special Provisions Act and Geneva Convention, a vehicle can
3	permits valid in Japan (Road Traffic Act, Article 107-2) a) Must be issued by
4	temporary import was granted (Special Provisions Act, Article 2) ○ A registration number and distinguish
5	107-2; Order for Enforcement of the same Act, Article 39-4, and Article 39-5, paragraph 1) (1)
6	neva Convention, Article 18-2; Special Provisions Act, Article 3) ○ It must be within 1 year
7	the Cabinet Order prescribes. [Road Traffic Act, Article 107-2; Order for Enforcement of the
8	is information for reference. 1. Placing objects [Act, Article 76, paragraph 3; Article 119, paragraph
9	activities on the road (1) Road Traffic Act, Article 76, paragraph 4, item 1: Obstructing tra
10	bstructing traffic (drunkenness) (2) Road Traffic Act, Article 76, paragraph 4, item 2: Obstructing tra

Figure 1. Sample of Concordance Output of the Word “act”

As convenient and valuable as a word list and concordance output can be, another way to help visualize the data is in the form of a word cloud. From an often lengthy and complicated word list, one can use an online word cloud generator such as www.wordcloud.com to easily visualize of the relationship between the word list and frequency. Words from a selected corpus are represented by font size based on their frequency within the corpus texts. These word clouds are convenient in that they allow users to quickly identify important vocabulary within a corpus (Friginal, 2018), and can be used in a variety of ways within a classroom as well (Holsworth, 2011). Below in Figure 2, is a word cloud created by the police corpus (traffic and security) that have been translated and used in this study.

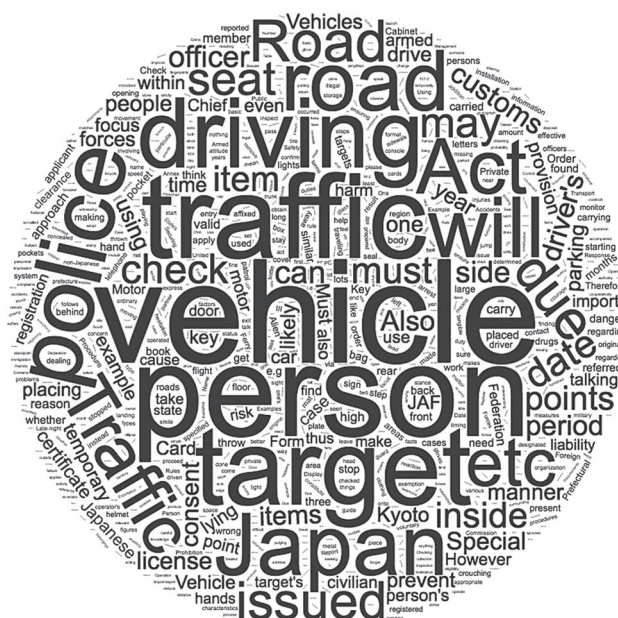


Figure 2. Word Cloud Generated from the Police Corpus

The above word cloud image and word list are based on the two translated texts constituting the police corpus, however, when a keyword list is used as a benchmark for comparison in a key word analysis, new data becomes available (O’Keeffe et al. 2007) (See Table 1 above for a keyword list). The reason is that a keyword list brings to light words that are disproportionate in frequency compared to a general corpus yet are worthy of inclusion for analysis. In this case, the BNC serves the function as the key word corpus for comparison. For example, word frequencies, word types, and token counts that differ between the BNC keyword list and the initial word list consisting of the police corpus can be analyzed. Table 2 below shows data about the cumulative percentages of tokens and word types of the police corpus when referenced with the BNC keyword list.

Table 2. *Keyword List using Chi-Squared Tests with BNC*

BNC Word Level	Base	Token Count	Token %	Cumulative Token %	Word Type	Word Type %	Cumulative Word Type %
1000		6533	69.31	69.31	765	47.46	47.46
2000		1251	13.27	82.58	340	21.09	68.55
3000		955	10.13	92.71	249	15.45	84.00
4000		227	2.41	95.12	78	4.84	88.84
5000		74	.79	95.91	46	2.85	91.69
6000		37	.39	96.3	24	1.49	93.18
7000		13	.14	96.44	13	.81	93.99
8000		13	.14	96.58	11	.68	94.67
9000		10	.11	96.69	7	.43	95.1
10000		3	.03	96.72	2	.12	95.22

Note. BNC = British National Corpus.

This is valuable information because it highlights that a cumulative 92.71% of tokens are represented within the first three base word lists, and a cumulative 95.91% of tokens within the police corpus is represented within the first five base word lists. This means that the if the police were to focus on the essential vocabulary present within the first three base word lists, that would provide them with almost 93% coverage of the vocabulary needed to comprehend the language present within the police corpus thus far. As one can see, the cumulative token percentage the ten thousand base word level is only 96.72%, or a marginal increase from the five thousand level of .81%. The means that the Kyoto police clearly need to focus on high frequency vocabulary and how it is used within police contexts.

Future Directions

This research project is still in its early stages. There are plans to translate further documents that have been provided from the Kyoto police force in order to create a more representative corpus of approximately 100,000 words. From this more complete corpus, further and more detailed analyses will be conducted. In addition to data from the more robust corpus, interviews are planned with active duty police officers who interact with foreign people in Kyoto. These interviews will be conducted in order to assess the accuracy of the data from the corpus and to highlight additional areas for further investigation such as rail station police interactions and dealing with drunk and disorderly situations.

It is hoped that once the final data set and police-genre corpus has been created, it will be the foundation for the development more effective and appropriate learning materials with the ultimate goal of fostering better L2 English skills of the Kyoto police force. According to O'Keeffe & McCarthy (2010) when the learning goal is a discipline-specific, then materials from a specialized corpus are required. Once the materials are created, they would certainly be of benefit to other prefectural police departments within Japan. However, it would also be interesting to explore comparative corpora of English used in different major centers around Japan such as Tokyo, Sapporo, and Fukuoka.

It is with great appreciation to Kyoto Sangyo University for providing the funding to help get this research project started. It has already shed important light on the unique language usage and specific needs of L2 English learning of the Kyoto police force. Not only active duty police officers, but students of Kyoto Sangyo University will benefit from this research. Students will be able to more actively learn L2 English that is immediately applicable to a career with the Kyoto police force. Both the researcher, Kyoto Sangyo University, and the Kyoto police force eagerly await the final results of a complete corpus that better represents the police-genre of L2 English and the positive outcomes that come from its analyses.

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ESP アプローチと警察官実用英語の L2 コーパス

マイケル ホールズワース

要 旨

グローバル社会において、共通語としての英語の役割は大きくなっている。日本においても、様々な職業現場で英語コミュニケーション能力の重要性が認識されている。特に重要な職業分野として、日常的に外国人と接する機会が多い警察官があげられる。日本の警察官が直面している課題は、海外からの外国人旅行者や日本在住の外国人と効果的なコミュニケーションをとるための実践的な英語運用能力と英語でコミュニケーションを取ることに自信である。本稿では、ESP 理論を基盤に構成された新たなプロジェクトと京都の警察官が学ぶべき英語表現を調査するためのコーパスに関して議論する。また、京都産業大学からの補助金がどのように本研究を支援しているか示す。

キーワード：ESP, コーパス, 警察官のための実用英語, コミュニケーション, 第2言語としての英語